



Wellness Information For Cats

Wellness Visit

As your cat ages, we recommend annual wellness visits. These visits are designed to help monitor them for any changes and to prevent disease. They are also required to continue to prescribe any ongoing medications your cat may need.

During the visit, your veterinarian will evaluate important things such as:

- History
- Body weight
- Dental disease
- Bones and joints
- Heart and lungs
- Skin
- Digestive system

Physical exam findings will allow us to make recommendations for treatments and preventative measures that will minimize disease transmission and prolong the health of your cat.

We will discuss your cat's individual needs for vaccines and parasite prevention based on their lifestyle and exposure. As your cat ages, the frequency of wellness visits may increase as we begin to monitor/treat specific conditions.

Obesity

Obesity is an epidemic in the cat population. It could lead to a number of health risks including diabetes, heart and respiratory disease, cancer, arthritis, urinary issues, and a reduced lifespan.

Your veterinarian can demonstrate how to body condition score your cat and discuss diets and methods of weight loss to help you develop a plan to increase your cat's lifespan.

Behaviour

Inappropriate elimination (urination, spraying) is a common reason cats are surrendered or euthanized. This unwanted behaviour may sometimes be a result of underlying health issues or stress. If your cat is expressing unwanted behaviour, please discuss with your family veterinarian who can provide resources or treatments to help fix or reduce it.

Licensing Your Cat

All cats and dogs in Calgary must be licensed. If your cat is not already licensed, please visit the website www.calgary.ca or call 311. You may face a fine if your pet is not licensed.

Dental Care

Bad breath and red/inflamed gums may be clinical signs of underlying dental disease. Dental disease could lead to a number of health issues. Cats could begin to develop dental disease at less than one year of age (presents as red and swollen gums). Cats in particular tend to develop resorption lesions (FORLs), which are painful and result in salivation, bleeding gums and difficulty eating. These teeth often have to be removed. Talk to your veterinarian if you have questions about dental disease in your cat or if you would like to book your cat for a dental.



Preventative Diets

Feline Lower Urinary Tract Disease (FLUTD) is a term used to describe conditions that affect the bladder urethra. Male indoor cats are greatest risk of being affected and symptoms present as straining to urinate and vocalization. The condition could be deadly and treatment is costly. There are many diets to help prevent your cat for FLUTD.

A dental diet can help to reduce tartar buildup and secondary dental disease.

Talk to your family veterinarian for further information about diets to feed your cat which can help prevent FLUTD and dental disease.

Pets Poisons

Be aware that many different products and medications could be toxic for your cat. For example:

- Tylenol is fatal to cats
- Ibuprofen will cause significant gastrointestinal issues

If you suspect your cat has been exposed to a toxin, please bring it to an emergency clinic. If you are unsure if the contaminant is poisonous, you can visit www.aspc.org or call the National Animal Poison Control (ASPCA) 1-888-426-4435. **A consult fee applies; you will be assigned a case number for your veterinarian to follow-up.

Travelling With Your Cats

If your cat is travelling outside of the province, you should be aware that they may be exposed to viruses, parasites, fleas and ticks that are not found in Alberta. It is important to start looking into which viruses and parasites are prevalent in the areas you are travelling prior to travel.

Talk to your family veterinarian as medications could be given for prevention. Please ask us for our information handouts on travelling with your cat as well as potential risks when travelling.

Outdoor Cats

Allowing cats outdoors without supervision is not recommended as it increases the risk of accidents and trauma related to fights.

Parasites/Worms: Outdoor cats are exposed to a number of parasites, some of which are zoonotic (transmitted from animals to humans). If your cat goes outdoors, methods to minimize the spread of diseases from pets to human include regular deworming and washing your hands after handling your cat or their feces.

Medications should be discussed with your family veterinarian before applying. ***Some topical medications purchased at pet stores could be fatal to cats.***

Ticks in Alberta: Alberta has a free surveillance program that monitors for the tick that carries the bacteria *Borrelia burgdorferi*, which is the cause of Lyme disease in both pets and people. If you find a tick on your cat, please place the tick in a plastic bag or container with a moist tissue and bring it into your veterinary clinic. The tick will be sent away to determine if it carries the bacteria.

Pet Insurance

Pet insurance is strongly recommended at every age. Emergencies are always an unexpected cost that can add stress to any situation. Having an insurance plan already in place will help ease your concerns when and if an accident or illness happens. Once a pet has a pre-existing illness/accident, the insurance company will not cover it under their health plan. For this reason, it is best to get insurance as soon as possible. Common insurance companies include Trupanion, Petsecure and Pets Plus Us.

 **trupanion**[™]
Medical insurance for your pet.

 **PETS**  **US**[®]
a pet owner's best friend

 **Petsecure**[™]
CANADA'S PET INSURANCE

Trusted Resources

Veterinary Partner: www.veterinarypartner.com

Pets Web MD: www.webmd.com

Worms & Germs: www.wormsandgermsblog.com

Indoor Pet Initiative: www.indoorpet.osu.edu